

Discussions on the departments' surplus have continued, and it is clear that a large part of the surplus is funds that have been set aside for specific purposes but have not yet been used. I do not think this is right – decided future commitments should be funded by future revenues.

Some of the saved funds are strategic funds that the Faculty allocated to the departments for a specific purpose, often in connection to recruitment. In the future, we will pay these funds retroactively. We will decide on the funding as we do now, but the departments will requisition the funds once they have been used. In connection with this change, we are planning to set a limit on how long the funds may be used.

The national board of SciLifeLab has held its first meeting. The board is chaired by Göran Sandberg, and our representative is Hans Adolffson. A number of attractive recruitment positions (two per university) will hopefully be announced very soon. We have chosen ecological genomics and RNA biology as Stockholm University's fields in this first announcement. Another round is planned for next year – I urge the departments to keep this in mind.

Recruitment is one of the universities' most important processes, and when it comes to teaching positions, in spite of our decentralised organisation, the Faculty has great influence and responsibility. The question is whether there is a way to streamline the process. As I see it, the actual process from us receiving the applications to us hiring somebody is working very well. The appointment committees and administrators are doing an excellent job, and in most cases we also have very good experts. Sometimes the process takes too long, which is something we are now trying to address by scheduling all meetings early. I think that the shortcomings are mostly in the choice of fields and the marketing of the positions. Are we able to choose the fields that will be most important to us in the future – fields in which there are strong candidates that we can attract? Are we working actively enough to attract strong candidates to the positions? There are many different ways of doing this, one of which is for researchers to use their contact networks. The Faculty currently requests a list of potential candidates before approving the position. A comparison between these lists and the applicants shows that there is often very little overlap. What conclusion can we draw from this?

The Faculty, as well as the university as a whole, will reach the funding cap for education this year. This means that, in the future, the departments will not get paid for all courses and programmes they want to provide – we will have to prioritise. I think this is a good thing, as it could lead to a better range of programmes. This spring, a work group appointed by the "Undergraduate Programmes Committee" (grundutbildningsberedningen) has discussed how this prioritisation should be done and has presented an interesting and well-thought-out proposal.

Last autumn, we introduced funding for sabbatical semesters. Eleven applications were received in response to this spring's announcement, only one of which came from the Faculty of Science. I was surprised by the limited interest – I think that a longer research stay in a different environment is very enriching.

And so the semester is coming to an end, spring is upon us and summer is right around the corner. I wish you all a pleasant holiday when the time comes!

Anders